

## **February 27, 2025**

At the Regularly Scheduled Meeting of the Mayor and Board of Aldermen/women of the Town of Canton held at the Town Hall at 85 Summer Street, February 27, 2025, at 6:00pm with Mayor Smathers, and Aldermen/women Mull, Hamlett, and Proctor present, and Shepard absent the following proceedings were held.

### **A. Call to Order**

Mayor Smathers called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m.

### **B. Roll Call**

Mayor Smathers stated that Assistant Manager Walker, Clerk Dunbar, and Town Attorney Morgan were present.

### **C. Pledge/Invocation**

Alderman Hamlett led the pledge of allegiance.

### **D. Approval of Minutes:**

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to approve February 13, 2025, minutes as presented. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

### **E. Mayor Comments**

N/A

### **F. Aldermen/women Comments**

Alderwoman Proctor stated that the Empty Bowl Fundraiser is approaching and invited everyone in attendance to the event. Alderwoman Proctor stated that Haywood Pathways is the only emergency shelter outside of Asheville. Alderwoman Proctor Stated that this event has a breakfast, lunch and dinner and this event will take place at Longs Chapel Methodist Church.

### **G. Public Comments:**

Carol Cartwright asked The Board as they were headed into budget season to strongly consider selling the colonial theater or decommissioning it. Mr. Carwright stated that the \$36,000 spent on insurance could be greatly used elsewhere. Mr. Cartwright stated that the \$36,000 could be used to lease trash cans from Waste Pro, in hopes that residents would stop complaining about the 50lb weight limit for trash cans.

### **H. Manager's Reports**

Assistant Manager Walker gave the cash report and the Tax report. Assistant Manager Walker stated that she handed out the budget books to department heads and the budget meetings will be held on April 10<sup>th</sup>. Assistant Manager Walker stated that the electrical work for the temporary fire department was finished this week. Assistant Manager Walker Stated that the bid to come in for the ramp.

Dunbar stated that he applied for the Western North Carolina Community Foundation Grant and was awarded \$50,000 for trails that were damaged during Hurricane Helene. Dunbar stated that he intended to use \$25,000 for Chestnut Mountain and the other \$25,000 at Rough Creek Watershed. Dunbar stated that Elevated Trail Design would be repairing the two land slides at Chestnut Mountain, then repairing the Berm Park. Dunbar stated that the work should begin next week. Dunbar stated that two different companies came to help clear trails at Rough Creek Watershed, Dunbar said that he hoped that property will be open soon.

Dunbar gave The Board an update on the summer camp program. Dunbar stated that since Recreation Park was so damaged during the flood and there being no shelter, his plan was to move the program to the International Paper Complex. Dunbar stated that the program will be the same, but they plan on getting a van to shuttle campers to the pool. Dunbar stated that parent meetings will start next week.

## **J. New Business**

### **1. Pigeon River Garden Club: Co-Sponsorship**

Debbie Mayers, from the Pigeon River Garden Club presented a Co-Sponsorship request to use the field at Recreation Park for their fundraiser called River Fest. Mrs. Mayers stated the event will be on July 26. Mrs. Mayers stated that they will have a lot of vendors who are active in protecting our waterways. Ms. Mayers asked if the trackless train would be available to rent for this event. Assistant Manager Walker stated that having the trackless train should not be a problem, but the group had to fill out the rental form for the train. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to approve the Co-Sponsorship. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion, and the motion carried.

Mayor Smathers thanked Pigeon River Garden Club for the timeline of the Co-Sponsorship. Alderman Hamlett told the Garden Club he was pleased with the detail of the Co-Sponsorship.

Marty Yates from the Pigeon River Garden Club introduced Preston Jacobson from Haywood County Water Ways to The Board. Mayor Smathers thanked Mr. Jacobson for his work protecting the Waterways in Haywood County, and for their work cleaning up the rivers from Hurricane Helene. Mr. Jacobson stated that he was thrilled to be apart of an event on the river.

## **2. New Franchise Agreement**

Dunbar presented The Board with new franchise agreement to replace the existing ordinance that will expire on April 11, 2025. Dunbar stated that Attorney Morgan has looked over the new ordinance and agrees with it. Dunbar stated that The Board will have to vote on the new ordinance twice before they can enact it. Attorney Morgan stated that this requirement is in the general statute. Alderwoman Mull made the motion to approve the new franchise agreement. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

## **3. Haywood Pathways: Empty Bowls Fundraiser**

Assistant Manager Walker stated that Haywood Pathways is hosting a fundraiser called empty bowls. Assistant Manager Walker stated that Haywood Pathways is inviting the board to the event, they are also asking for a donation. Alderman Hamlett made a motion to donate \$50 to Haywood Pathways. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. Alderwoman Proctor sustained from voting. Mayor Smathers, Alderman Hamlett, and Alderwoman Mull voted in favor of the motion and the motion passed.

## **4. Champion Credit Union Lease Extension**

Assistant Manager Walker stated that Champion Credit Union asked for another lease extension for the Academy St building, through the end of May. Assistant Manager Walker stated that this should not hinder our ability to start renovating the building. Attorney Morgan asked why the Town was listed as the Lessee and not the Lessor? Attorney Morgan suggested crossing out the mistake. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to accept the lease agreement from Champion Credit Union and mark out the mistake. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

## **5. Canton Middle School: Pickle like a Bear Co-Sponsorship**

Clerk Dunbar presented to The Board a Co-Sponsorship for Canton Middle School. Canton Middle School wants permission to use the pickleball courts at Recreation Park for their annual Pickle like a Bear pickleball tournament. Clerk Dunbar Stated that the event will be on May 5, 2025. Alderwoman Proctor made a motion to approve Pickle like a Bear co-sponsorship, pending that Canton Middle School provides the correct insurance form. Alderwoman Mull seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

## **6. Budget Amendment**

Assistant Manager Walker presented to The Board a budget amendment. Assistant Manager Walker stated that most of the

amendments were in the same department. Assistant Manager Walker stated that two amendments were from Tropical Storm Fred and Hurricane Helene.

## **7. ABC Board Appointment**

Assistant Manager Walker stated that the ABC Board is requesting that Ed Underwood be nominated for another two-year term. Assistant Manager Walker stated that the ABC Board needs recommendations for another candidate to serve a one-year term. Mayor Smathers stated that The Board will talk amongst themselves to make a recommendation for that appointment. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to accept Ed Underwood for a two-year term on the ABC Board. Alderman Hamlett seconded the motion. All voted in favor of the motion and the motion carried.

## **K. Closed Session Pursuant to N.C.G.S. 143-318.11 (a)(4)(5)(6)**

Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter closed session pursuant to 143-318.11 (a)(4) at 6:21pm. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. With all in favor the motion carried. Alderwoman Mull made a motion to enter open session at 6:41pm. Alderwoman Proctor seconded the motion. All were in favor and the motion carried.

## **L. Adjournment**

The next regular meeting will be on Thursday, March 13, 2025, at 6:00 p.m. at the Town Hall located at 85 Summer Street, Canton, NC 28716. There being no additional business, Mayor Smathers adjourned the Meeting at 6:41 p.m.

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Sam Dunbar, Town Clerk